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EXAMINER

KRAMER, JAMES A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3627

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 11-12, 16, 17 and 20 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Quinlan et al in view of Solomon et al.

Quinlan et al. teaches and method and system for redeeming rebates. Specifically, Quinlan et al. teaches a fulfillment administrator that receives an electronic file transfer from a point-of-sale data processing and storage system comprise a plurality of purchase data records. Each purchase data record comprises a list of products purchased, the date and the transaction serial number for the qualified transaction. The purchase record may also comprise other data such as store number. (column 9; lines 39-42 & 47-52).

Examiner notes that this represents receiving first sales information generated by a retail seller, which identifies a deal of a first commodity, retail seller and a time and place. It also teaches storing the received information in a first storing part.

Quinlan et al. further teaches a consumer makes a rebate claim by entering and transmitting a serial number corresponding to the qualified transactions and identifying information such as personal information about the consumer (column 9; lines 18-22). Quinlan et al. teaches that serial number corresponding to the qualified transaction is provided to the user

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at the time of purchase on a receipt by the point-of-sale (reference column 8; lines 18-61).

Examiner notes that the serial number corresponding to the qualified transaction represents Applicant's second sales information, as it is generated by the retail seller and identifies the retail seller, time and place at which commodity was sold. As such Examiner notes that this teaching represents receiving purchase information, which comprises personal information and second sales information generated by the retail seller identifying the retail seller, place and time at which second commodity was sold.

Examiner further notes that as Applicant's invention is intended to match purchase information, then in the case where the purchase information matches, the first commodity and the second commodity are one and the same. In addition, as the fulfillment administrator collects information on a plurality of products from both the point-of-sale and the consumer, it is consistent that the information collected will be on first and second commodities.

Quinlan et al. teaches the fulfillment administrator then associates each serial number in the stored data record with a purchase data record having an identical serial number. Thus for each serial number transmitted by a customer and stored as a stored data record, there is a corresponding purchase data record with the identical serial number received by the electronic file transfer (column 10; lines 6-15). Examiner notes that the purchase data record represents Applicant's first storing part and stored data record represents Applicant's second storing part. Examiner further notes that corresponding the stored data record with the purchase data record represents storing the information as a valid purchase information.

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Examiner notes that the stored data record of Quinlan et al., discussed above includes information for identifying the seller, identifying a deal made by the seller and identifying the second commodity (claim 2). Examiner once again notes that the serial number of Quinlan et al. is used to identify all of these things.

Examiner notes that the stored data record indicates both a time order of deals and a date of the deal (claims 3 and 4). Examiner notes that the date of the transaction is both the date and an indication of the time order of the deal.

Quinlin et al. teaches transmitting a display screen with an input area for inputting purchase information (claim 6). Reference column 12; lines 1-7.

Quinlin et al. does not teach storing the second information as one of valid purchase information, invalid purchase information or unidentified validity purchase information based on a verification process that includes determining whether purchaser submitted purchasing data in saved in the first storage part including a range of values of a second information between a minimum value of the second information to a maximum value of the second information.

Solomon et al. teaches as part of a rebate processing system determining breakage, which refers to any event that prevents a rebate from being completed, for example denying based on improper purchase dates or purchase price (this represents the second information being within a range from a minimum to a maximum, i.e. min date to max date or min price to max price). In order to track breakage a submitted rebate request from a user must be stored with an indication

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of the rebate status (e.g. valid, invalid or unidentified validity) . (see column 5, lines 24-49 and column 6, lines 38-45).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the rebate processing system of Quinlin to include storing with the user submit request a rebate status indication whether the request is valid, invalid or unidentified validity as taught by Solomon. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the references in order to track breakage rate.

Examiner notes that claims 1-4 and 6, rejected above are directed to a purchase information collection method. Claims 7-9, directed to a purchase information collecting program, are rejected as an apparatus for performing the method of 1-4 and 6. Claims 11-12 are directed toward a purchase information collecting method and are rejected with claims 1-4 and 5. Claim 16 is directed towards a purchase information collecting program. Examiner notes that claims 16 and 17 are rejected as an apparatus for performing the method of claims 1-4 and 6 (detailed above). Finally claim 20 is directed towards a method performed by a computing system. Examiner reference the rejection to claims 1-4 and 6 in rejection of claim 20.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 2/28/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant asserts that the combined prior art (Quinlan in view of Solomon) fails to teach a range of values between a minimum value of the second information to a maximum value of the second information and considering whether purchase information has a value within this range of values when storing purchase information as invalid, or as unidentified validity.

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Examiner respectfully disagrees. As pointed out in the rejection above Solomon teaches defining a rebate status (i.e. invalid or unidentified validity) (see for example column 6, lines 38-45) based on an event that prevents the rebate from being completed, such as improper date or improper price (see for example column 5, lines 25-32). It is the position of the Examiner that determining an improper price or date utilizes a min date or price and a max date or price. As such when determining the rebate status, Solomon clearly uses a range of information.

***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

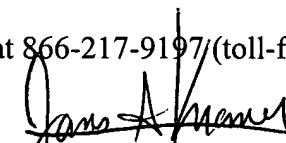
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Kramer whose telephone number is (571) 272 6783. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (8AM - 5PM).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski can be reached on (571) 272 6771. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197/(toll-free).



James A. Kramer  
Examiner  
Art Unit 3627

jak